

Inge Radford

Inge Radford was born in Vienna and now lives in Millisle in Northern Ireland. She lost six members of her family in the Holocaust.

In 1942 my widowed mother and five brothers, Sigmund, Kurt, Walter, Herbert and Fritz, were deported from Vienna to Minsk in the former USSR.



Inge aged seven

From evidence given in post-war criminal trials we know what they, with thousands of other Austrian Jews, endured before they were finally shot or gassed. They were initially incarcerated in the Minsk ghetto and then transferred to the labour camp in the village of Maly Trostinec.

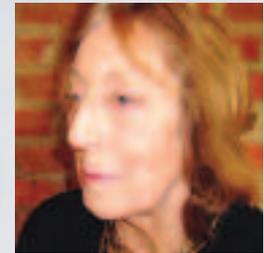
Maly Trostinec had no permanent gas chambers but a further contribution to the Nazis' 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question' was made by the use of mobile gas vans. In May 1943, 500 victims were murdered every day in the gas vans which went daily to and from Minsk and Maly Trostinec.

Five of my family were spared the unspeakable ordeal of ghetto living, imprisonment and violent death. At 16, my eldest sister, Elli, went to live with relatives in the USA. My 13- and 14-year-old brothers, Ernst and Erich, went to live on

farms in Denmark, and my nine-year-old sister, Rose, and I, aged seven, came to England (separately and unbeknown to each other for several years) under the auspices of the Jewish Children's Refugee Organisation.

That we five grew into relatively unscarred and useful citizens was due to many people – Jewish and non-Jewish – whose aim, whether acting from religious or humanitarian motives, was to minimise the trauma of family separation and loss for us and for hundreds of other refugee children. My sister lived happily with a Yorkshire Baptist family until she joined our older sister in America. Again, a local voluntary committee set up in Sevenoaks, Kent – the epitome of 'middle England' – raised money to bring me and five other children out of Europe and to guarantee the £50 per child asked for by the British government, who had arranged the mechanics of our escape.

Homes and hearts were opened to us. Many children like myself stayed with our 'adopting' families through school, university, marriage and parenthood. For me, these new, kind and loving relationships blurred the picture of a small, smiling woman surrounded by several boys all waving as the train pulled out of Vienna station.



Inge Radford today

Suzi Diamond



Suzi aged three

Suzi (Suzi) Molnar was born in Debrecin, near Budapest, in Hungary. In April 1945, she was found with her brother, Tibor (Terry), in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp by the British liberators. She was two years old and her brother was five.

Suzi's father had been taken away by the Nazis. Suzi, her mother and her brother were rounded up and forced into cattle trucks. They were sent first to Ravensbrück, a concentration camp for women and children, and then on to Bergen-Belsen. During the journey the three huddled together, their mother attempting to shield them from the overcrowding and squalor. On arrival at Bergen-Belsen, the two-year-old was washed down with a fire hose.

Suzi remembers her mother giving her and Terry almost all of her own rations. Eventually her mother became so weak that she was moved to another hut; she did not return, and died of typhoid shortly after the arrival of the British.

When the camp was liberated, Suzi herself was ill with typhus. The army established a makeshift hospital for the thousands of ailing survivors. An Irish volunteer paediatrician, Bob Collis, working with the Red Cross, befriended some of the orphaned

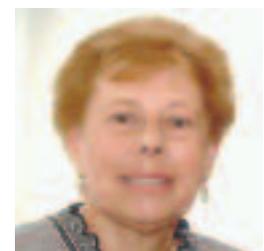
children, and eventually brought them home to Ireland.

Suzi and Terry recovered their physical health and Bob Collis arranged for them to be adopted by an Orthodox Jewish couple, Elsie and Willie Samuels, in Dublin.

Like many Holocaust survivors, for Suzi the emotional damage has outlasted the physical. According to the prevailing attitude at the time of her youth, traumatic experiences were suppressed in the hope that they would be forgotten. Suzi buried her concentration-camp experience. However, she still lives with a fear of water, an utter abhorrence of dirt and a mistrust of all that is unfamiliar. Also, like many other survivors, she was unable to speak about Bergen-Belsen until fifty years after leaving it behind.

Suzi is married to Alec Diamond and she has spent her life in Dublin. They have two grown-up children, Bernard and Lynette. Terry passed away in London in January 2007.

I remember the long, oblong-shaped carriage. My mother went over to one of the corners; there were no seats, only wooden floors, and the three of us huddled together.



Suzi Diamond today